

Caveman Conditioning: Uncivilized, Minimalist Training Methods  
<http://owenjohnstonkarate.com>

Caveman conditioning revolves around rather uncivilized and minimalist, but very rewarding, strength training methods out in nature, whether it be the woods, the mountains, wherever. Why bother with a gym or expensive equipment when you can get your strength training for little to no money? Even if the closest thing to nature you have available to you is a public park, you can still get a free but difficult workout by trying some of the ideas from “caveman conditioning”! No matter where you go, you just need some creativity and knowledge of proper exercise technique.

Please note – this article is not related in any way to the “Caveman Conditioning” of Bodyforce. This is my own take on “primitive” training methods, and no copyright infringement is intended in any way. Check out Bodyforce’s awesome Caveman Conditioning page by visiting the blog below and clicking on “Caveman Conditioning” - <http://stuardorrill.wordpress.com/>

Precautions

Dress for safety and for the weather. Always have permission to use the land. (Unless you, a close friend, or a family member owns it – in which case, knock yourself out. If you get yourself in trouble though, “I told you so.”) Take all proper precautions before you go into the woods, including hydration, sunblock, any needed equipment, hiking shoes, thick socks, and bug repellent spray. Read this article on Lyme disease, which can be contracted from ticks (often picked up in the woods during warmer months) - <http://goo.gl/WtO6iK>

**Caveman Conditioning – Strength Training Methods**

Drag away dead trees by hand. Chop down a tree for firewood. Shovel some dirt. You’d be surprised how great these are for training both strength AND endurance, until you’ve done one of them steadily for an hour. Especially in hot weather.

You can use a relatively low but very sturdy tree branch for pullups, leg raises, various gymnastics exercises, and so forth. You could also perform a burpee, jump up to the branch explosively, do a pullup, drop, and repeat, for a full set.

Run through and navigate the natural obstacle course that the woods provide – this includes jumping ditches. Climb trees for grip work and overall agility. Hang a rope from a tree and learn some rope climbing exercises to train your grip and overall body strength even more. Ropes are also useful in pullup variations and mud run style obstacles. Look into army training and drills for ideas. Look online for the Army Field Manual 21-20 and read it thoroughly.

Clear any straw and or leaves in a particularly shady and grassy area that could be used for various calisthenics – just remember to wear long shirts and pants for this. Also make sure that if you’re going to use the area and regularly, spray it for ticks using Permethrin or another recommended pesticide. Anyway, some excellent calisthenics in such an area include using a tree for support when practicing gymnastics backbends or various handstand exercises. You could also wrap a length of heavy rope around a tree to use for striking practice. Just make

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sure you get instruction from a qualified martial arts instructor before trying this and wear hand protection, such as wrist wraps. I recommend using rice bucket exercises to strengthen your wrists, and using other such exercises to toughen the hands. Here is a writeup I did on this topic - <http://goo.gl/NUcLAI>

Picture of a “tree makiwara” - <http://goo.gl/L8Dz7m>

For plenty of great calisthenics tutorials, including some on exercises listed in this post, head over to my body weight training playlist page. Simply point your web browser to the blog below and click on “Body Weight Training” near the top.  
<http://martialartsplaylist.blogspot.com>

Sprint through an abandoned field – but make absolutely sure you clear a straight path of anything that you could trip over or that could pierce shoes or skin, as well as wear sweatpants and running shoes with excellent heel support. If the woods are in a particularly hilly area, you can go for hill sprints, which are great for explosiveness!

Repurpose materials from abandoned properties out in the woods. This includes using cinder blocks for biceps curls and other lifts. You could also use any old beams, chairs, heavy duty rope, and bricks that are available. Old beams or planks of wood could be laid across a ditch, or used as a calf raise step (put it next to a tree or wall that you can use to assist in balance). Bricks can be used in some hand balancing exercises, and as support in one leg squats. Old chairs can be used for an incredible variety of calisthenics. These include decline pushups, chair dips, gymnastics L-sits, uneven or “lever” pushups (as they are called in the first Convict Conditioning book, but using a chair instead of a basketball), and so forth. You could push your car down a path through the woods, along a mountain path that is not highly trafficked, and so forth. It is amazing for both cardio and giving you a whole body workout! Check out the below video for some ideas.

<http://goo.gl/5rYbJY>

Did you like these “Caveman Conditioning” strength training ideas? Do you have any of your own that you want to share or brag about? Drop me a line in the comments on this article’s blog post - <http://goo.gl/lqNeE4>

View the article All About Progressive Calisthenics for much more about body weight training, including articles and videos - <http://goo.gl/npO6Jp>

Great blog post on the official Progressive Calisthenics certification blog, about a similar approach to “hybrid” training methods - <http://goo.gl/qnYto4>

For more ideas on improvised training equipment, and plenty of tutorial videos, head to my related blog - <http://www.oddobjecttraining.com>